

# Reading Toolkit: Grade 3 Objective 3.A.3.e

Standard 3.0 Comprehension of Literary Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Literary Text

Indicator 3. Use elements of narrative texts to facilitate understanding

Objective e. Identify and explain relationships between and among characters, setting, and events

Assessment Limits:

Connections between and among characters

Connections between and among characters

Connections between and among situations

Connections between and among situations

Cause/effect relationships between characters' actions and the results of those actions

Cause/effect relationships between characters' actions and the results of those actions

Cause/effect relationships between and among situations and events

Cause/effect relationships between and among situations and events

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## Advanced/Gifted and Talented Reading Grade 3 Objective 3.A.3.e

### Other Objectives Addressed

- a. Identify and distinguish among types of narrative texts
- b. Identify and explain the elements of a story
- c. Identify and describe the setting and the mood
- d. Identify and analyze the characters
- f. Identify and describe the narrator

### Instructional Task

Students will use elements of narrative text to produce a "To Tell the Truth" game show based on a literary text (synthesis). "To Tell the Truth" is based on a television game show in which a panel asks questions of three contestants all claiming to be the same character. The panel members use their understanding of the narrative elements to distinguish the real character from the imposters, and the contestants use their understanding of narrative elements to write their "real" and "impostor" answers (evaluation).

### Development of Task

- Students will read text of appropriate complexity and map the elements of narrative text.
- The teacher will introduce the concept of the game "To Tell the Truth," which demonstrates that good questions and thorough understanding can help you to distinguish whether or not someone is telling the truth (kinesthetic/tactile learning style). See "How to Play To Tell the Truth," below.
- To play "To Tell the Truth," students should be divided into panel and contestant groups. The class should select several characters from the text so that there are enough rounds of the game for everyone to play as a panel member or a contestant. Both the panel groups and the contestant groups will answer questions based on the elements of narrative text in preparation for the game. Students in the contestant group must also compose "bluff" answers.
- The teacher may use the "To Tell the Truth" Panel questions to model the types of questions students should create.

Objectives	"To Tell the Truth" Panel Questions
Identify and distinguish among types of narrative texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What type of narrative text was your story? (tall tale, realistic fiction, poetry, etc.)</li> <li>• Give an example from your story that demonstrates the type of narrative text.</li> </ul>
Identify and explain the elements of a story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the main problem you face.</li> <li>• What do you do to solve the problem?</li> <li>• How does the order of the events in your story lead to a solution to the problem?</li> </ul>
Identify and describe the setting and mood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At what time period does your story occur?</li> <li>• Where and when does your story take place?</li> <li>• Describe the mood of your story.</li> </ul>

Identify and analyze the characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell one character trait that describes you and an example of how you showed that trait.</li> <li>• Describe one character trait you have that caused a problem in the story.</li> <li>• How have you changed from the beginning of the story to the end?</li> </ul>
Identify and explain relationships between and among characters, setting and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How was the setting of your story important to the events that occurred?</li> <li>• What characters would have to be changed if your story took place in a different setting?</li> <li>• What story event had the greatest effect on you?</li> <li>• What other character was most similar to you? What character was the most different?</li> </ul>
Identify and describe the narrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is the narrator in your story?</li> <li>• How are you related to the narrator?</li> <li>• Describe the narrator.</li> </ul>

#### How to Play "To Tell the Truth"

- In the television game show "To Tell the Truth," three contestants, each of whom claims to be the same person, are questioned by a panel of four celebrities in an attempt to identify who is the real one and who is bluffing. The contestant usually holds an unusual occupation or has done something noteworthy.
- After each celebrity has had a turn in asking several questions of the guests, they each vote as to who they think is the real person. When this is finished, the panel moderator says, "Will the real \_\_\_\_\_ please stand up?"

The real person stands, the other two reveal who they really are, and the contestants win money based on how many incorrect votes were placed.

## Lesson Seeds

### Reading Grade 3 Objective 3.A.3.e

#### Activities

After students have read a narrative text, direct them to a section of the text where the resolution of a cause/effect relationship is recorded. The teacher should list on four pieces of poster paper a single different cause for that final result. Place these posters in four different areas of the room. Have each student locate himself to that area of the room where is located the cause he/she believes to be correct. Each of the four groups should return to the text to find justification for his/her belief. After reviewing the text, students are allowed to revise their opinions and locate to another area. A final review will determine the correct cause or combination of causes.

Students will read a narrative text where cause/effect relationships exist. The teacher will isolate the cause/effect relationships for students. Teacher and students will work on placing each relationship in its correct sequence in the narrative. Next students will analyze the text to determine whether the relationship involved characters, setting, events, or any combination of the three. Finally students will analyze the sequence of these relationships in the text to determine if any cause/effect relationship was the cause of the following relationship or if the any cause/effect relationship works in isolation.

After reading a narrative text, students will be placed in small groups. Each student within the group will be given a teacher generated graphic organizer that will allow student to analyze relationships among characters.

Character A	Relationship	Support
Character B		
Character C		
Character D		

The example above requires students to analyze Character A's relationships with three other characters. Each group's organizer will require those students to analyze the relationships of a different dominant character. For example the next group will analyze Character B or C. Once groups have completed their analysis of relationships, the information should be shared with the entire class. As the information is shared the teacher will create on the board or overhead a schema of the relationships of all the narrative's characters. This will allow students to have a visual of the interplay among all characters. As an extension for advanced students they may analyze the character relationships to determine how they affect story events or setting.

After reading a narrative, the teacher should place students in small groups. Each group will be given an envelope which will contain pieces of paper with names of characters, details of setting, and story events from the narrative. Students should be instructed to return to the text and create with the manipulatives as many narrative-based relationships as possible with the information from the envelope. Students should always be able to justify the relationships with text support.

## Clarification

### Reading Grade 3 Indicator 3.A.3

To show proficiency of the skills stated in this indicator, a reader will demonstrate an understanding of the **elements of narrative texts** which are the components through which a story is told. Identification of each component and its relationship to all other components in a story assists a reader in comprehension of an entire text. As a text requires more complex thought processes, a reader advances from the identification, recognition, and recall of literal elements to the inference, analysis, and evaluation of more abstract elements. Thinking about all the elements in a story and determining how they fit together allow the reader to understand and evaluate an entire text and its complexity.

In order to comprehend narrative text, a reader must **identify and distinguish among types of narrative texts**. Narrative text tells a story to make a point, to express a personal opinion, or to provide a reader an enjoyable experience. By recognizing the characteristics of a variety of literary texts which represent diverse perspectives, a reader is better able to construct meaning from a text.

- Fiction  
prose writing that tells an imaginary story
- Nonfiction  
prose writing that tells about real people, places, and events
- Realistic Fiction  
prose writing set in the modern world
- Science Fiction  
prose writing that explores unexpected possibilities of the past or future by using scientific theories or data and imagination
- Historical Fiction  
contemporary fiction set in the past, may reference actual people or events
- Tall Tales  
humorously exaggerated stories about impossible events in which the main characters have extraordinary abilities
- Folktales  
stories passed by word of mouth from generation to generation
- Folklore  
traditions, customs, and stories passed down within a culture
- Myth  
a traditional story, usually by an unknown author, that answers a basic question about the world
- Legend  
a story handed down from the past about a specific person who usually demonstrates heroic accomplishments
- Fables  
brief tales that teach lessons about human nature
- Fairy Tales  
stories about imaginary beings possessing magical powers
- Fantasy  
literature that contains fantastic or unreal elements
- Biography  
story of a person's life written by someone else
- Autobiography  
nonfiction; a person tells about his or her own life

- Personal Narrative

personal story; a shorter form of autobiographical writing

- Memoir

type of autobiography, usually about a significant experience in the author's life

- Journals

a personal record of experiences or reflections

- Short Story

a brief work of fiction, usually readable in one session

- Essay

a short, cohesive work of nonfiction dealing with a single subject and presenting the writer's viewpoint

- Play

literature intended to be performed by actors in front of an audience; includes script with dialogue, a cast of characters, and stage directions

- Poetry

stories, ideas, and feelings expressed in compact, imaginative, often musical language

- Lyric Poetry

poetry that presents the thoughts and feelings of a single speaker

- Narrative Poetry

poetry that tells a story and includes narrative elements

To **identify, explain and analyze the conflict of a narrative and determine its role in advancing the plot**, a reader must know the structure of a narrative passage.

- In the beginning or exposition of a narrative, information is given about the characters, their location, and the situation in which they find themselves. This situation creates a story problem or conflict.
- A conflict can be created by single or multiple sources, either external (caused by outside forces) or internal (created within the character). Typical types of conflict include person versus person (problem between and among characters), person versus society (problem with the laws/beliefs of a group), person versus nature (problem with natural forces), person versus self (problem within a character regarding decision-making), and person versus fate (problem which seems out of a character's control). In complex texts, there may be multiple conflicts.

A character experiencing one of these conflicts may act on or speak about the conflict to other characters and be motivated to action by the conflict. In some narratives, a conflict may help clarify character traits for the reader. In other stories, a conflict can also advance the story events, pushing the characters to a critical point of a story.

A critical reader can identify and determine conflicts, sometimes isolating a common cause for different conflicts.

- In the rising action, the chronology of events develops and the conflict deepens. At the climax of the narrative, the deepening conflict reaches a critical point and can alter the subsequent events.
- As the conflict resolves, the narrative moves toward completion in the falling action.
- Finally, in the resolution the narrative comes to a close. A critical reader should be able to analyze the resolution of the conflict and trace the plot development to determine how each stage of that development advanced the plot.
- As the level of a text becomes more difficult and the main plot develops, a subplot of lesser importance may be present. The subplot may have all the elements that a main plot does and will tell a story that relates to character development, theme development,

or any other story element. The subplot may have an effect on the outcome of the main plot or may simply serve as additional, perhaps interesting, element of the story.

To **identify, describe, and analyze details that provide information about setting, mood created by setting, and the role the setting plays in the text**, a reader must first know what information to look for in a text. Setting is where and when a story takes place. Clues to setting include any of the following: time, day or dates, month, year, season, historical references, geographical names, landscape details, and weather elements. As the complexity of a text increases, a reader should take note not only of stated setting details but also look at more subtle details.

Setting can relay information about characters to a reader. A character's reaction to an environment, whether familiar or unfamiliar, gives clues to what a character is feeling or how a character will act in certain circumstances. Changes in setting may signal changes in mood and development of a character.

Mood is the feeling a text creates within a reader. Setting can help create mood. For example, a setting in an abandoned house creates an eerie mood. Details of that setting help establish that uncomfortable mood in a reader. An author also creates mood through dialogue and word choice.

A critical reader will be attentive to the details of setting, mood, and character and their integration within a narrative.

Not all narrative texts have theme, but in those that do, there is often more than a single theme. **Theme is the author's message to the reader or the underlying idea of a text.** Theme is often relayed to a reader through characters—what they say, what they do, or what others say about them—as well as by other narrative elements.

To **identify and analyze characterization**, a reader must identify a character as a person, animal, or imaginary being in a narrative. Major characters are most involved in the conflict of a narrative and are central to much of the story action. Minor characters are less important and become known to a reader through their interaction with major characters.

Characters may reveal their attitudes and innermost thoughts through their speech and their behavior. For more complicated texts, a reader is privileged to know directly the interior thought processes of a character. This enables a reader to draw conclusions about why a character might behave the way he/she does and to consider reasons for the type of interactions that character has with other major or minor characters. Then these interactions allow other characters to comment about the behavior or speech of that character. One character's comments about another character form a direct link to understanding their behavior.

Character speech, action, thought, motivation, and reaction are interdependent and work together to create well-rounded characters. These elements make a character "real" and lend believability to the narrative. When characters are made "real," they, like real people, change and grow. They are called dynamic characters because of their development. Their opposite, static characters, change not at all or only marginally. The strong, dynamic character shifts or is shifted by the plot, each exerting an equally forceful influence on each other. Character and plot then become linked in a narrative.

To **identify, explain, and analyze relationships between and among characters, settings, and events**, a reader must discover how each element is linked. Connections between and among characters are established by elements of characterization. Connections between

and among situations are established by key events and how these events fit together. A critical reader can determine an organizational pattern, such as cause and effect, between or among situations and then draw conclusions about characters and their speech and behaviors within the context of the situation.

For more complicated texts, a critical reader can isolate characters and determine major from minor characters, the degree to which each is developed, and how they affect each other and the story events. A critical reader can isolate each story event to see its effect upon previous events and those that follow it as well as the effect the event exerts upon a character or characters.

**To identify and describe the narrator**, a reader must determine the teller of the story. In a first person narrative, the story is told by a character in the story who uses the nominative pronouns I, me, and we. In a third person narrative, the narrator is a voice outside the story action that uses the nominative pronouns he, she, it, and they.

The speaker of a poem is the voice that "talks" to the reader. The speaker of a poem is not necessarily the poet.

**To identify, explain, and analyze the actions of the characters that serve to advance the plot**, a reader should know that characters cause the plot to happen. Usually a story plot is based on what characters say, do, or believe. Conflicts evolve from interactions between and among characters. In turn, plots develop around conflicts. What a character does affects the development of the plot as well as its resolution.

A critical reader of literary text can

- isolate characters, determining if they are major or minor characters, noting their actions, speech, and thoughts, and observing the attitudes of other characters toward them
- detail conflicts created by and among characters and determine the type of conflict that is created
- follow a plot, judging how that plot is driven by character elements or character conflict
- determine how character, conflict, and plot function together

**To analyze an author's approach to issues of time in a narrative**, a reader must first be able to follow the elements of a narrative--exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution--and to identify key events within each of those divisions of a narrative. Some events may be related as flashbacks during which the author relates an event out of sequence at an earlier time. A flashback provides a reader with information that will help him/her understand setting, characters, or conflict. A critical reader is aware of transitional words or text features that signal a flashback.

Foreshadowing is present through hints or clues in a text that suggest what may occur later in the sequence of the narrative's events. Foreshadowing occurs throughout a narrative and helps to create a tension as the reader anticipates what will happen. A critical reader understands that plots are not always chronological and that these two techniques are used to augment a reader's comprehension of and interest in a narrative.

**To identify, explain, and analyze point of view and its effect on the meaning of a narrative**, a reader must know that point of view is the perspective from which an author tells a story. There are two major points of view--first person and third person. In a first person narrative, the story is told by a character in the story. This narrator is a participant in the story action and tells the story using the pronouns I, me, and we. This type of narration is



limited because a reader knows only the narrator's perspective of other characters, the setting, and story events.

In a third person narrative, the story is told by someone who is not a character in the story. This type of story-teller may relate events much like a reporter relaying the news and use the nominative pronouns she, he, and they. More often, though, a third person narrator will relay the thoughts and attitudes of a single character, usually the main character. This is limited omniscient narration. At times a narrator will relay the thoughts and feelings of all characters. This is the omniscient or all-knowing narrator.

A critical reader knows that not all narrators are reliable and that they may present information limited by their own knowledge and observations. This, in turn, may limit a reader's knowledge. To construct meaning of a narrative, a critical reader must acknowledge the scope and the limitations of each type of narration and then using other narrative elements, draw conclusions about meaning.

To analyze the interactions among narrative elements and their contribution to meaning, a reader must have knowledge of all narrative elements and their dependence upon each other. A critical reader must determine the type of narrative being read, the type(s) of conflict in the narrative, the relationship between the setting and the mood of the narrative, the ways that character is developed, the relationship that exists among the characters, the setting, the story events, and the point of view from which a narrative is told. Each of these elements must be analyzed in isolation and then observed as a piece of a whole narrative. Finally, a critical reader makes judgments about the relative importance of each of these elements to a particular text, and then using each element and its contribution, constructs meaning of a whole text.